

# Stage Morality on the Wane & Outline of "The Vampire"

Paul M. Potter Sinks to Writing "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge."  
Mantell Undertakes Foreign Tour of Record Length

[From Our New York Dramatic Correspondent.]

WHEN a playwright of the ability and standing of Paul M. Potter entangles his pen in the web of mediocrity and vulgarity as seen in "The Queen of the Moulin Rouge" at the Circle theater, it is time to wonder whether or not the playmaking profession has not fallen among evil days.

When the dramatizer of "Tribby" took to dabbling largely in the musical field, composing lyrics, etc., he met with fair success, but his latest dramatic effort is nothing less than a cloud on his reputation. Whatever possessed him to allow his name to appear on the program is impossible to understand.

"The Queen of the Moulin Rouge" is another attempt to transplant the atmosphere of the Parisian music halls in toto to this country, and, like less pretentious efforts in the same direction, it must fall when put on in the guise of a legitimate production. Produced in somewhat different vein as a variety show for summer audiences it would possibly gain a better reception.

This lewd and noxious "drama" has but little novelty, and its originators

were so hard put for material to fill the various scenes and acts that they actually resuscitated the old artist model "stunt," and, in spite of all the former model scenes from which to adapt this one, they evolved a very inferior imitation. This model wore a union suit of pink that bagged at the knees. Moral viciousness is often popular, unfortunately, when it is clever, but moral viciousness that is stupid has never yet been provided with an excuse for existence, even by our most versatile thinkers and whoever and whatever they may be.

That the morals of the New York stage are growing more lax seems evident to many observers. Some of the vaudeville acts and songs of the last twelve months were better unseen and unheard.

One or two of the recent Salome dancers represented so nearly the historical figures in the orgies of barbarian Rome of old that we of the present have now really very little to learn from the entertainers of the past. Some one recently asked in a prominent publication, "What would Nero think if he came to America today?"

To the present writer the obvious answer would be: "Nero wouldn't think. He would need all his time to go around to see the sights and learn



MARIE DORO, STARRING ON TOUR IN "THE RICHEST GIRL."

what a second rate voluptuary he was." And his parting word would be: "Think what I have missed by being born a few hundred years too soon! O ancient Rome, sacred ground of my nativity, how innocent you were!"

Robert Mantell has just closed a

series of contracts that call for one of the longest tours, if not the longest one, ever undertaken by an American actor. The plans include going to Australia, a short season in Honolulu, a jump over to South Africa and a final engagement in London. Mr. Mantell will take a strictly American com-

pany and will present only classic roles. Just why he contemplates appearing in London it is very difficult to tell. Mr. Mantell is just the kind of American actor that the Englishmen like to harpoon and lampoon. They will hire him a stuffy little theater at an advanced rate and stand from un-

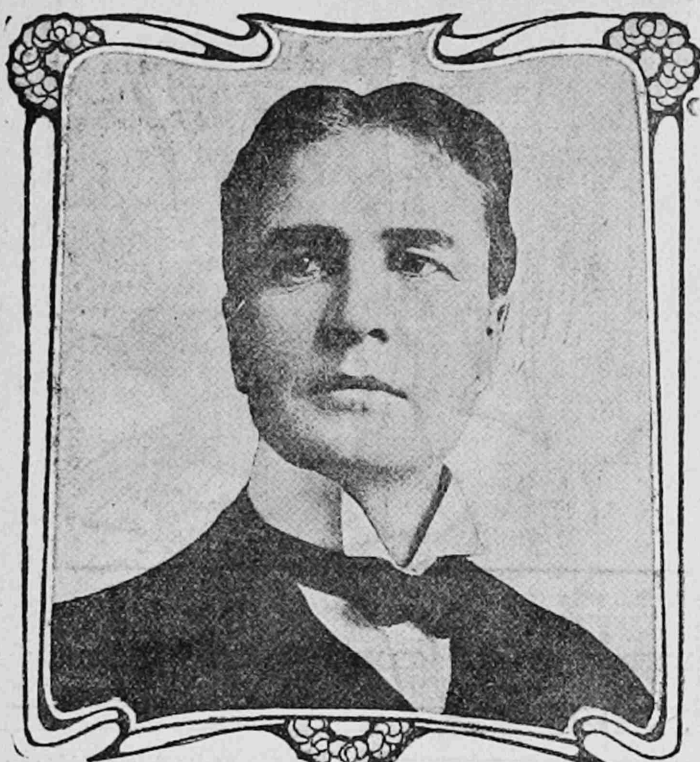
der to avoid the fall. Mr. Mantell is too florid in style to succeed in London. He has not what the Britishers claim to recognize as "polish," and such a lack is not a crime to English theater goers—it borders on degeneracy, in their way of thinking.

Even if Mr. Mantell had a new play of strength that was within his limitations his chances would be none too bright. But to carry the old standard roles before the Londoners—Shylock, Richard III, etc.—is like placing a church fair chromo on the walls of the Louvre. Mr. Mantell is an actor, but he is not an artist.

"The Vampire" in Europe.  
Mr. Edgar Allan Woolf and Mr.

George Sylvester Viereck have concluded arrangements whereby "The Vampire" will be produced in Vienna, Budapest and in Italy almost simultaneously with the American production which the Shuberts now have in rehearsal for American presentation.

Signor Ermete Novelli will play the leading role in the Italian version. "The Vampire" deals with a man who is able to absorb ideas from his associates through some "superior" power of the mind. The exercise of this weird power leaves their brains as barren as sponges. One young man apparently becomes the victim of paresis, while the vampire lives and thrives on the appropriated brain matter. FREDERICK TREGELLES.



WILLIAM GILLETTE, APPEARING AS STAR IN "SAMSON."



TRIXIE FRIGANZA IN "THE AMERICAN IDEA," NEW COHAN SUCCESS.

## Racing Skaters and the Leading Meets Where They Compete; Wood and Sinnirud to Train Eastern Men—Hoppe's Billiard Defi

THE smoothing down of the friction between the Amateur Athletic union and the other organizations trying to control skating has had a most beneficial effect upon the sport, and it looks now as if one of the most brilliant seasons this country has ever seen is about to open.

The A. A. U., convinced that the skaters would prosper best if left to govern themselves, scratched the sport officially off its list, and the other bodies reunited to form a new association under the name of International Skating Union of the United States and Canada, which is affiliated with the A. A. U.

This organization has just given out its championship meets, and following is the schedule:

Week of Jan. 25 to 30—  
National indoor championships at Cleveland, O.  
International indoor championships at Pittsburgh.  
Week of Feb. 1 to 6—  
International outdoor championships at Saranac Lake, N. Y.  
Canadian outdoor championships at Montreal, Canada.  
Dates to be fixed later—  
Eastern outdoor championships at Newburg, N. Y.  
Eastern indoor championships, St. Nicholas rink, New York.  
International figure skating championship, Cleveland, O.  
Feb. 22—  
National outdoor championships at Verona Lake, N. J.

Besides these titular gatherings, there will be many handicap and scratch events held, and racing men will be kept busy.

Almost a hundred clubs will be represented in competition, and they are gathering material from all sides.

The New York Athletic club has entrusted the formation of its 1909 teams to Walter Lee, the metropolitan champion fancy diver, who will captain it. Lee is himself a crack, and he has corralled for the Mercury foot every high class skater he could lay hands on.

His winning of E. A. and W. M. Taylor from the fold of the Irish-American Athletic association will greatly strengthen the aggregation, for the former knows few equals at indoor work, and the latter is a reliable and steady all round performer. In Joseph Miller the New York Athletic club has a youngster of unusual promise who showed championship form last season. G. Lyman, W. Smith, A. Sarony, E. Schultheis and B. Higgins are all first rate competitors.



AMATEUR SKATERS WHO LEAD AMONG AMERICAN RACERS THIS YEAR.

Dave Slayback, owner of Verona Lake, New Jersey, and head of the skating interests in this section of the country, intends to have on the ice a strong batch of steel blade welders, and Morris Wood, J. Nilson and Peter Sinnirud will have them in charge. Sinnirud has paid special attention to the making of one of the greatest skaters in the world. The other men mentioned as best are W. McCrow, Hugh Palliser and Williams. The Saranac Lake (N. Y.) Skating

club will again send forth to conquer the great American boy champion, Edmund Lamy. This seventeen-year-old wonder gave the list of records some severe jolts last season and swept everything before him, winning the majority of national and international events with an ease that proved him as great a lad as ever wore a skate and of truly phenomenal speed. There are rumors also of other finds at Saranac, but there has been no chance to try them out properly.

The Wanderers' Hockey club of New York will be another of the clubs having a team on the ice. Phil Kearney, the veteran and many time champion, will be at its head, and he will have with him J. Wray, C. Granger, N. Ingham and several other lesser lights. The usual classy contingent will wear the colors of the Saratoga Skating club of New York city. Woodward Sutphen, winner of the one and three mile United States championships of 1903, will lead the team, and among his best supporters will be Ollie Wood and Herbert Earle. Ollie is

a brother of the world renowned professional, Morris Wood, and it is believed by many that were it not for his great nervousness, which kills his chances at present, he would emulate the feats of his elder. He may overcome it.

Morley and Muller will skate for the Riversides this year, and Kirk will represent the Pastime Athletic club.

In Boston and Chicago several prospective short distance champions have been uncovered.

The Pittsburgh racers, who center at the Duquesne Garden rink, have organized a team to send to other cities to compete in match races.

Cleveland, Boston and Buffalo clubs have promised to send entries to the championship meet at Saranac Lake, N. Y. Increased interest should thus be given those events.

### Hoppe's Billiard Challenge.

In a recent statement Willie Hoppe of New York, the world's champion billiard player, challenges any billiard player in the world to a series at 15.1 or 15.2 style for from \$1,000 to \$10,000 a side. The young expert declares that he will not be under contract to any billiard concern.

Following is the statement in part: "As I have just passed my twenty-first birthday and am capable of handling my own interests I wish to place before the public my plans for the future. I have made up my mind to sever my connections with any one billiard concern.

"I intend to devote my time to elevate billiards to the standard where it belongs. Why should there be in this country at the present time only two players of championship caliber, they being Sutton and myself? There should be, with all the billiard rooms that we have, at least six players of championship class.

"Although I say it myself, I have been the only young player since the time of Ives that has come to the front and become champion. In times past I was discouraged at the way billiards was being conducted in this country, but I never gave up hope, for I knew some day I would be at the top of the heap, where I am now.

"To show the public that I am sincere in my statements to help put billiards where it belongs, here is a challenge to the world. I will play any billiard player in the world a three, four, five or six night match, 500 points a night, at either style of game, 18 inch balk line, one shot, or 18 inch balk line, two shots, for the sum of from \$1,000 to \$10,000, the match to be played in any city agreed upon."

HARRY GRANT.

### PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Eugene Walters is finishing a play in which Viola Allen will star. It is as yet unnamed.

"Henry Bernstein, author of 'The Thief' and 'Samson,' is the Sardou of today," says Charles Frohman, "so far as the suspense is concerned, and I think he goes the late great dramatist

one better, because he builds his climaxes without melodrama; he builds naturally. His dialogue also is natural and true."

Somebody asked Mrs. Julie Opp Faversham, after marveling at the symmetry and slenderness of her figure as she appears in a director's gown in

"The World and His Wife," how on earth she managed to bring her figure down to such beautiful proportions. "By the greatest prescription in the world," was her reply—"three sons in five years."

Adelaide Kelm is to appear as Portia in Chicago in a production of "The Merchant of Venice."

Henry E. Dixey is no longer play-

ing "The Devil." He now has a new comedy by Edith Ellis "Mary Jane's Pa."

Clyde Fitch is said to be making an adaptation of a French play called "The Gutter."

Giles Shine is still playing in Rose Stahl's company in "The Chorus Lady."

J. Sawtelle has joined Annie Rus-

sell's company, playing "The Stronger Sex."

Amelia Rose of "The Soul Kiss" company on tour has resigned a leading role for a novel reason. The story of the play tells of an eccentric Frenchman who is in search of a particular kind of kiss, different from all others. It comes from the soul. To aid him in the search Miss Rose had

to be kissed for about five minutes at a time, and she says she is so tired of this part of her work that she had to give up the role. She is now playing another part in the company.

William Faversham will appear in London next season.

"The Heart of Maryland" is being used by a stock company in the west.

When Guy Bates Post stars, his

wife, Jane Peyton, will be associated with him in the production.

Lena Ashwell, the London actress, was married lately to an English physician.

"Countess Olga von Hartzfeldt is to have the leading roles in a musical play, 'The Girl at the Helm.'"

Victor Herbert is to write an American grand opera.